



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES
REHABILITATION SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

SEP 27 2007

Ms. Cheryl A. Walsh
Director
Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
801 West 10th Street, Suite A
Juneau, AK 99801-1894

Dear Ms. Walsh:

The Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) acknowledges your letter of May 22, 2007, transmitting the State Plan for the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services Program and Supplement for the Supported Employment (SE) Services Program in the form of a preprint of affirmative assurances and required attachments on behalf of Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, in compliance with Sections 101(a) and 625 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (the act). In addition, RSA acknowledges receipt of the assurance(s) of compliance submitted in conjunction with the State Plan on September 18, 2007.

The State Plan in the form of a preprint of affirmative assurances and required attachments, the Certifications Regarding Lobbying for both the VR and SE programs, and the assurance of compliance were reviewed to ensure conformity with statutory provisions of the act, implementing regulations and the administrative requirements of RSA.

RSA approves the Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation State Plan for the VR and SE programs based on the submitted preprint of affirmative assurances, required attachments and the assurance of compliance submitted in conjunction with the State Plan on September 18, 2007. In accordance with this approval of these State Plan updates and the accompanying assurance, RSA is making available to Alaska its FY 2008 Title I, Part B, and Title VI, Part B, grant awards.

Please be advised that RSA will closely monitor Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation's activities in support of the assurance it has made. As a component of that monitoring, RSA may request that Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation provide us periodic updates on the status of these activities.

Page 2 – Ms. Walsh

If you have any questions about this letter, please contact your state liaison, Regina Luster at (202) 245-6309 or regina.luster@ed.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Edward Anthony". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "E" and "A".

Edward Anthony, Ph.D.

Delegated the authority to perform
The functions of Commissioner for the
Rehabilitation Services Administration

cc: Regina Luster

STATE OF ALASKA

Department of Labor and Workforce Development

DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

Sarah Palin, Governor

801 West 10th Street, Suite A
Juneau, AK 99801
V/TTY: (907) 465-2814
Fax: (907) 465-2856

September 18, 2007

Mr. Edward Anthony, Ph.D.
United States Department of Education
Mail Stop 2800, PCP Room 5146
7100 Old Landover Road
Landover, MD 20785-1605

Dear Dr. Anthony,

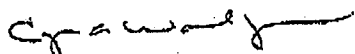
I am writing in response to your letter we received via fax on September 14, 2007 regarding the Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation's (ADVR) FY2008 State Plan in which we indicate three vocational rehabilitation counselors employed by ADVR do not meet the standards as established under the comprehensive system of personnel development (CSPS) and are not currently in a training program.

At one point, all three of these counselors met the provisions of the Guidance to Final Regulations in 66 Fed. Reg. 4379, 4424-4425, January 17, 2001, as they were enrolled in graduate training programs. Unfortunately, they were unsuccessful in completing the graduate work and did not achieve the standards of the CSPD.

ADVR is therefore providing assurance, through this letter, that only those staff who meet ADVR's CSPD personnel standard will be allowed to perform the duties and functions of a qualified vocational rehabilitation professional, specifically the determination of the requirement for the need of VR services; the approval of an IPE; the approval of IPE amendments; and the determination that an individual's employment outcome is satisfactory. The necessary steps to implement this action will be in place as soon as possible and no later than September 30, 2008.

ADVR sincerely hopes this assurance meets the requirements as set forth in the correspondence of September 14, 2007 and that the approval of ADVR's FY2008 State Plan proceeds. Please let me know if there are further questions.

Sincerely,



Cheryl A. Walsh
Director, Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

cc: Regina Luster

STATE OF ALASKA

Sarah Palin, Governor

801 West 10th Street, Suite A
Juneau, AK 99801-1894
V/TTY: (907) 465-2856
FAX: (907) 465-2856

Department of Labor and Workforce Development

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

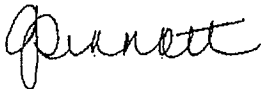
May 22, 2007

Edward Anthony, Ph.D.
U.S. Department of Education
Mail Stop 2800, PCP Room 5146
7100 Old Landover Road
Landover, MD 20785-1605

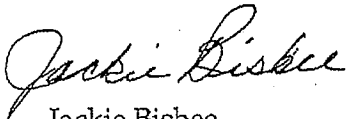
Dear Dr. Anthony,

Enclosed is the Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation's FY2008 State Plan. Included per the instructions in RSA-IM-07-02 are the entire preprint, signed certification pages, and all corresponding attachments.

Sincerely,



Gale Sinnott
Director



Jackie Bisbee
Chair, Governor's Committee on Employment and Rehabilitation of People with
Disabilities



Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

FY2008 State Plan



**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
& WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

**Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
Department of Labor & Workforce Development**

State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and the Supplemental
for the Supported Employment Services Program In accordance with Title I, Section
101(a) and Title VI, Section 625 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

OMB Control Number: 1820-0500, Expiration Date: January 31, 2010

Submitted To:

U.S. Department of Education
Mail Stop 2800, PCP Room 5146
7100 Old Landover Road
Landover, MD 20785-1605

Gale Sinnott, Director

Jackie Bisbee, Chair, Governor's Committee on Employment and Rehabilitation of
People with Disabilities

Table of Contents

Lobbying Certificates

Pre-print

Attachment 4.2 (c)	Summary of Input and Recommendations of the State Rehabilitation Council; Response of the Designated State Unit; and Explanations for Rejection of Input or Recommendations
Attachment 4.8(b)(1)	Cooperation with Agencies That Are Not in the Statewide Workforce Investment System and with Other Entities
Attachment 4.8(b)(2)	Coordination with Education Officials
Attachment 4.8(b)((3)	Cooperative Agreements with Private Non-profit Vocational Rehabilitation Service Providers
Attachment 4.8(b)(4)	Evidence of Collaboration Regarding Supported Employment Services and Extended Services
Attachment 4.10	Comprehensive System for Personnel Development Plan
Attachment 4.11(a)	Results of Comprehensive Statewide Assessment of the Rehabilitation Needs of Individuals with Disabilities and Need to Establish, Develop, or Improve Community Rehabilitation Programs
Attachment 4.11(b)	Annual Estimates of Individuals to be Served and Costs of Services
Attachment 4.11(c)(1)	State's Goals and Priorities
Attachment 4.11(c)(4)	Goals and Plans for Distribution of Title VI, Part B Funds
Attachment 4.11(d)	State's Strategies and Use of Title I Funds for Innovation and Expansion Activities
Attachment 4.11(e)(2)	Evaluation and Report of Progress in Achieving Identified Goals and Priorities and Use of Title I Funds for Innovation and Expansion Activities
Attachment 6.3	Quality, Scope and Extent of Supported Employment

CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

Applicants must review the requirements for certification regarding lobbying included in the regulations cited below before completing this form. Applicants must sign this form to comply with the certification requirements under 34 CFR Part 82, "New Restrictions on Lobbying." This certification is a material representation of fact upon which the Department of Education relies when it makes a grant or enters into a cooperative agreement.

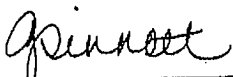
As required by Section 1352, Title 31 of the U.S. Code, and implemented at 34 CFR Part 82, for persons entering into a Federal contract, grant or cooperative agreement over \$100,000, as defined at 34 CFR Part 82, Sections 82.105 and 82.110, the applicant certifies that:

(a) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the making of any Federal grant, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal grant or cooperative agreement;

(b) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal grant or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form - LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions;

(c) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subgrants and contracts under grants and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly.

As the duly authorized representative of the applicant, I hereby certify that the applicant will comply with the above certification.

NAME OF APPLICANT State of Alaska Dept. of Labor & Workforce Development Division of Vocational Rehabilitation	PR/AWARD NUMBER AND / OR PROJECT NAME Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program under Title I, Part B of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as Amended
PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE Gale Sinnott, Director, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation	
SIGNATURE 	DATE 5-22-07

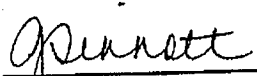
CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

Applicants must review the requirements for certification regarding lobbying included in the regulations cited below before completing this form. Applicants must sign this form to comply with the certification requirements under 34 CFR Part 82, "New Restrictions on Lobbying." This certification is a material representation of fact upon which the Department of Education relies when it makes a grant or enters into a cooperative agreement.

As required by Section 1352, Title 31 of the U.S. Code, and implemented at 34 CFR Part 82, for persons entering into a Federal contract, grant or cooperative agreement over \$100,000, as defined at 34 CFR Part 82, Sections 82.105 and 82.110, the applicant certifies that:

- (a) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the making of any Federal grant, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal grant or cooperative agreement;
- (b) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal grant or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form - LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions;
- (c) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subgrants and contracts under grants and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly.

As the duly authorized representative of the applicant, I hereby certify that the applicant will comply with the above certification:

NAME OF APPLICANT State of Alaska Dept. of Labor & Workforce Development Division of Vocational Rehabilitation	PR/AWARD NUMBER AND / OR PROJECT NAME State Supported Employment Services Program under Title VI, Part B of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as Amended.
PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE Gale Sinnott, Director, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation	
SIGNATURE 	DATE 5-22-07

STATE PLAN FOR THE STATE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES PROGRAM
AND
STATE PLAN SUPPLEMENT FOR THE STATE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROGRAM

STATE: Alaska

AGENCY: Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

AGENCY TYPE: GENERAL BLIND X COMBINED

SECTION 1: STATE CERTIFICATIONS

- 1.1 The Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (name of designated state agency or designated state unit) is authorized to submit this State Plan under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended¹ and its supplement under Title VI, Part B of the Act.
- 1.2 As a condition for the receipt of federal funds under Title I, Part B of the Act for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services, the Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (name of designated state agency)³ agrees to operate and administer the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program in accordance with the provisions of this State Plan⁴, the Act, and all applicable regulations⁵, policies, and procedures established by the secretary. Funds made available under Section 111 of the Act are used solely for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services under Title I of the Act and the administration of the State Plan for the vocational rehabilitation services program.
- 1.3 As a condition for the receipt of federal funds under Title VI, Part B of the Act for supported employment services, the designated state agency agrees to operate and administer the State Supported Employment Services Program in accordance with the provisions of the supplement to this State Plan⁶, the Act, and all applicable regulations⁷, policies, and procedures established by the secretary. Funds made available under Title VI, Part B are used solely for the provision of supported employment services and the administration of the supplement to the Title I State Plan.
- 1.4 The designated state agency and/or the designated state unit has the authority under state law to perform the functions of the state regarding this State Plan and its supplement.
- 1.5 The state legally may carry out each provision of the State Plan and its supplement.
- 1.6 All provisions of the State Plan and its supplement are consistent with state law.
- 1.7 The Director of the Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (title of state officer) has the authority under state law to receive, hold, and disburse federal funds made available under this State Plan and its supplement.

- 1.8 The Director of the Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (title of state officer) has the authority to submit this State Plan for vocational rehabilitation services and the State Plan supplement for supported employment services.
- 1.9 The agency that submits this State Plan and its supplement has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan and its supplement.

Gale Sinnott
(Signature) Gale Sinnott, Director

5-22-07
(Date)

Director, Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
(Title)

- 1 Public Law 93-112, as amended by Public Laws 93-516, 95-602, 98-221, 99-506, 100-630, 102-569, 103-073, and 105-220.
- 2 Unless otherwise stated, "Act" means the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.
- 3 All references in this plan to "designated state agency" or to "the state agency" relate to the agency identified in this paragraph.
- 4 No funds under Title I of the Act may be awarded without an approved State Plan in accordance with Section 101(a) of the Act and 34 CFR part 361.
- 5 Applicable regulations include the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR Parts 74, 76, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, 85, and 86 and the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program regulations in 34 CFR Part 361.
- 6 No funds under Title VI, Part B of the Act may be awarded without an approved supplement to the Title I State Plan in accordance with Section 625(a) of the Act.
- 7 Applicable regulations include the EDGAR citations in footnote 5, 34 CFR Part 361, and 34 CFR Part 363.

SECTION 2: PUBLIC COMMENT ON STATE PLAN POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- 2.1 Public participation requirements.** (Section 101(a)(16)(A) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.10(d), .20(a), (b), (d); and 363.11(g)(9))
- (a) Conduct of public meetings.**
The designated state agency, prior to the adoption of any substantive policies or procedures governing the provision of vocational rehabilitation services under the State Plan and supported employment services under the supplement to the State Plan, including making any substantive amendments to the policies and procedures, conducts public meetings throughout the state to provide the public, including individuals with disabilities, an opportunity to comment on the policies or procedures.
- (b) Notice requirements.**
The designated state agency, prior to conducting the public meetings, provides appropriate and sufficient notice throughout the state of the meetings in accordance with state law governing public meetings, or, in the absence of state law governing public meetings, procedures developed by the state agency in consultation with the State Rehabilitation Council, if the agency has a Council.
- (c) Special consultation requirements.**
The state agency actively consults with the director of the Client Assistance Program, the State Rehabilitation Council, if the agency has a Council, and, as appropriate, Indian tribes, tribal organizations, and native Hawaiian organizations on its policies and procedures governing the provision of vocational rehabilitation services under the State Plan and supported employment services under the supplement to the State Plan.

SECTION 3: SUBMISSION OF THE STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT

- 3.1 Submission and revisions of the State Plan and its supplement.** (Sections 101(a)(1), (23) and 625(a)(1) of the Act; Section 501 of the Workforce Investment Act; 34 CFR 76.140; 361.10(e), (f), and (g); and 363.10)
- (a) The state submits to the commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration the State Plan and its supplement on the same date that the state submits either a State Plan under Section 112 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 or a state unified plan under Section 501 of that Act.
- (b) The state submits only those policies, procedures, or descriptions required under this State Plan and its supplement that have not been previously submitted to and approved by the commissioner.
- (c) The state submits to the commissioner at such time and in such manner as the commissioner determines to be appropriate, reports containing annual updates of the information relating to the:
- (1) Comprehensive system of personnel development;
 - (2) Assessments, estimates, goals and priorities, and reports of progress;
 - (3) Innovation and expansion activities; and
 - (4) Other updates of information required under Title I, Part B or Title VI, Part B of the Act that are requested by the commissioner.
- (d) The State Plan and its supplement are in effect subject to the submission of modifications the state determines to be necessary or the commissioner requires based on a change in state policy, a change in federal law, including regulations, an interpretation of the Act by a federal court or the highest court of the state, or a finding by the commissioner of state noncompliance with the requirements of the Act, 34 CFR 361, or 34 CFR 363.
- 3.2 Supported employment State plan supplement.** (Sections 101(a)(22) and 625(a) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.34 and 363.10)
- (a) The state has an acceptable plan for carrying out Part B of Title VI of the Act that provides for the use of funds under that part to supplement funds made available under Part B of Title I of the Act for the cost of services leading to supported employment.
- (b) The supported employment State Plan, including any needed annual revisions, is submitted as a supplement to the State Plan.

SECTION 4: ADMINISTRATION OF THE STATE PLAN**4.1 Designated state agency and designated state unit. (Section 101(a)(2) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.13(a) and (b))****(a) Designated state agency.**

- (1) There is a state agency designated as the sole state agency to administer the State Plan or to supervise its administration in a political subdivision of the state by a sole local agency.
- (2) The designated state agency is:
- (A) _____ a state agency that is primarily concerned with vocational rehabilitation or vocational and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities; or
- (B) X a state agency that is not primarily concerned with vocational rehabilitation or vocational and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities and includes a vocational rehabilitation unit as provided in paragraph (b) of this section.
- (3) In American Samoa, the designated state agency is the governor.

(b) Designated state unit.

- (1) If the designated state agency is not primarily concerned with vocational rehabilitation or vocational and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities, in accordance with subparagraph 4.1(a)(2)(B) of this section the state agency includes a vocational rehabilitation bureau, division, or unit that:
- (A) Is primarily concerned with vocational rehabilitation or vocational and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities and is responsible for the administration of the designated state agency's vocational rehabilitation program under the State Plan;
- (B) Has a full-time director;
- (C) Has a staff, at least 90 percent of whom are employed full-time on the rehabilitation work of the organizational unit; and
- (D) Is located at an organizational level and has an organizational status within the designated state agency comparable to that of other major organizational units of the designated state agency.
- (2) The name of the designated state vocational rehabilitation unit is the Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.

4.2 State independent commission or State Rehabilitation Council. (Sections 101(a)(21) and 105 of the Act; 34 CFR 361.16 and .17)

The State Plan must contain one of the following assurances.

- (a) The designated state agency is an independent state commission that:
- (1) Is responsible under state law for operating, or overseeing the operation of, the vocational rehabilitation program in the state and is primarily concerned with the vocational rehabilitation or vocational and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities in accordance with subparagraph 4.1(a)(2)(A) of this section.
 - (2) Is consumer-controlled by persons who:
 - (A) Are individuals with physical or mental impairments that substantially limit major life activities; and
 - (B) Represent individuals with a broad range of disabilities, unless the designated state unit under the direction of the commission is the state agency for individuals who are blind;
 - (3) Includes family members, advocates, or other representatives of individuals with mental impairments; and
 - (4) Undertakes the functions set forth in Section 105(c)(4) of the Act and 34 CFR 361.17(h)(4).
- or
- (b) X The state has established a State Rehabilitation Council that meets the criteria set forth in Section 105 of the Act and 34 CFR 361.17 and the designated state unit:
- (1) Jointly with the State Rehabilitation Council develops, agrees to, and reviews annually state goals and priorities, and jointly submits to the commissioner annual reports of progress, in accordance with the provisions of Section 101(a)(15) of the Act, 34 CFR 361.29, and subsection 4.11 of this State Plan;
 - (2) Regularly consults with the State Rehabilitation Council regarding the development, implementation, and revision of state policies and procedures of general applicability pertaining to the provision of vocational rehabilitation services;
 - (3) Includes in the State Plan and in any revision to the State Plan, a summary of input provided by the State Rehabilitation Council, including recommendations from the annual report of the Council described in Section 105(c)(5) of the Act and 34 CFR 361.17(h)(5), the review and analysis of consumer satisfaction described in Section 105(c)(4) of the Act and 34 CFR 361.17(h)(4), and other reports prepared by the Council, and the response of the designated state unit to the input and recommendations, including explanations for rejecting any input or recommendation; and
 - (4) Transmits to the Council:
 - (A) All plans, reports, and other information required under 34 CFR 361 to be submitted to the commissioner;
 - (B) All policies and information on all practices and procedures of general applicability provided to or used by rehabilitation personnel in carrying out this State Plan and its supplement; and

- (C) Copies of due process hearing decisions issued under 34 CFR 361.57, which are transmitted in such a manner as to ensure that the identity of the participants in the hearings is kept confidential.
- (c) *If the designated state unit has a State Rehabilitation Council, Attachment 4.2(c) provides a summary of the input provided by the Council consistent with the provisions identified in subparagraph (b)(3) of this section; the response of the designated state unit to the input and recommendations; and, explanations for the rejection of any input or any recommendation.*
- 4.3 **Consultations regarding the administration of the State Plan.** (Section 101(a)(16)(B) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.21) The designated state agency takes into account, in connection with matters of general policy arising in the administration of the plan and its supplement, the views of:
- (a) Individuals and groups of individuals who are recipients of vocational rehabilitation services, or, as appropriate, the individuals' representatives;
 - (b) Personnel working in programs that provide vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities;
 - (c) Providers of vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities;
 - (d) The director of the Client Assistance Program; and
 - (e) The State Rehabilitation Council, if the state has a Council.
- 4.4 **Nonfederal share.** (Sections 7(14) and 101(a)(3) of the Act; 34 CFR 80.24 and 361.60) The nonfederal share of the cost of carrying out this State Plan is 21.3 percent and is provided through the financial participation by the state, or if the state elects, by the state and local agencies.
- 4.5 **Local administration.** (Sections 7(24) and 101(a)(2)(A) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.5(b)(47) and .15) The State Plan provides for the administration of the plan by a local agency. Yes X No
If "Yes", the designated state agency:
- (a) Ensures that each local agency is under the supervision of the designated state unit with the sole local agency, as that term is defined in Section 7(24) of the Act and 34 CFR 361.5(b)(47), responsible for the administration of the vocational rehabilitation program within the political subdivision that it serves; and
 - (b) Develops methods that each local agency will use to administer the vocational rehabilitation program, in accordance with the State Plan.
- 4.6 **Shared funding and administration of joint programs.** (Section 101(a)(2)(A)(ii) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.27)

The State Plan provides for the state agency to share funding and administrative responsibility with another state agency or local public agency to carry out a joint program to provide services to individuals with disabilities. Yes X No
If "Yes", the designated state agency submits to the commissioner for approval a plan that describes its shared funding and administrative arrangement. The plan must include:

- (a) A description of the nature and scope of the joint program;
- (b) The services to be provided under the joint program;
- (c) The respective roles of each participating agency in the administration and provision of services; and
- (d) The share of the costs to be assumed by each agency.

4.7

Statewide and waivers of statewide. (Section 101(a)(4) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.25, .26, and .60(b)(3)(i) and (ii))
(a) Services provided under the State Plan are available in all political subdivisions of the state.

(b) The state unit may provide services in one or more political subdivisions of the state that increase services or expand the scope of services that are available statewide under this State Plan if the:

- (1) Nonfederal share of the cost of these services is met from funds provided by a local public agency, including funds contributed to a local public agency by a private agency, organization, or individual;
- (2) Services are likely to promote the vocational rehabilitation of substantially larger numbers of individuals with disabilities or of individuals with disabilities with particular types of impairments; and
- (3) State, for purposes other than the establishment of a community rehabilitation program or the construction of a particular facility for community rehabilitation program purposes, requests in **Attachment 4.7(b)(3)** a waiver of the statewide requirement in accordance with the following requirements:

(A) Identification of the types of services to be provided;

(B) Written assurance from the local public agency that it will make available to the state unit the nonfederal share of funds;

(C) Written assurance that state unit approval will be obtained for each proposed service before it is put into effect; and

(D) Written assurance that all other State Plan requirements, including a state's order of selection, will apply to all services approved under the waiver.

(c) Contributions, consistent with the requirements of 34 CFR 361.60(b)(3)(ii), by private entities of earmarked funds for particular geographic areas within the state may be used as part of the nonfederal share without the state requesting a waiver of the statewide requirement provided that the state notifies the commissioner that it cannot provide the full nonfederal share without using the earmarked funds.

4.8 Cooperation, collaboration, and coordination. (Sections 101(a)(11), (24)(B), and 625(b)(4) and (5) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.22, .23, .24, and .31, and 363.11(e))

(a) Cooperative agreements with other components of statewide workforce investment system.

The designated state agency or the designated state unit has cooperative agreements with other entities that are components of the statewide workforce investment system and replicates those agreements at the local level between individual offices of the designated state unit and local entities carrying out the One-Stop service delivery system or other activities through the statewide workforce investment system.

(b) Cooperation and coordination with other agencies and entities.

Attachment 4.8(b) (1)-(4) describes the designated state agency's:

- (1)** Cooperation with and use of the services and facilities of the federal, state, and local agencies and programs, including programs carried out by the undersecretary for Rural Development of the United States Department of Agriculture and state use contracting programs, to the extent that those agencies and programs are not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce investment system;
- (2)** Coordination, in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 4.8(c) of this section, with education officials to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services;
- (3)** Establishment of cooperative agreements with private non-profit vocational rehabilitation service providers, in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 5.10(b) of the State Plan; and,
- (4)** Efforts to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other state agencies and entities with respect to the provision of supported employment and extended services for individuals with the most significant disabilities, in accordance with the requirements of subsection 6.5 of the supplement to this State Plan.

(c) Coordination with education officials.

- (1)** Attachment 4.8(b)(2) describes the plans, policies, and procedures for coordination between the designated state agency and education officials responsible for the public education of students with disabilities that are designed to facilitate the transition of the students who are individuals with disabilities from the receipt of educational services in school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services under the responsibility of the designated state agency.

(2) The State Plan description must:

- (A)** Provide for the development and approval of an individualized plan for employment in accordance with 34 CFR 361.45 as early as possible during the transition planning process but, at the latest, before each student determined to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services leaves the school setting or, if the

designated state unit is operating on an order of selection, before each eligible student able to be served under the order leaves the school setting; and

- (B) Include information on a formal interagency agreement with the state educational agency that, at a minimum, provides for:
- (i) Consultation and technical assistance to assist educational agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including vocational rehabilitation services;
 - (ii) Transition planning by personnel of the designated state agency and the educational agency for students with disabilities that facilitates the development and completion of their individualized education programs under Section 614(d) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;
 - (iii) Roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, of each agency, including provisions for determining state lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services; and
 - (iv) Procedures for outreach to students with disabilities as early as possible during the transition planning process and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services.

(d) **Coordination with statewide independent living council and independent living centers.**

The designated state unit, the Statewide Independent Living Council established under Section 705 of the Act and 34 CFR 364, and the independent living centers described in Part C of Title VII of the Act and 34 CFR 366 have developed working relationships and coordinate their activities.

(e) **Cooperative agreement with recipients of grants for services to American Indians.**

- (1) There is in the state a recipient(s) of a grant under Part C of Title I of the Act for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services for American Indians who are individuals with disabilities residing on or near federal and state reservations.

☒ Yes ☐ No

- (2) If "Yes", the designated state agency has entered into a formal cooperative agreement that meets the following requirements with each grant recipient in the state that receives funds under Part C of Title I of the Act.

- (A) Strategies for interagency referral and information sharing that will assist in eligibility determinations and the development of individualized plans for employment;
- (B) Procedures for ensuring that American Indians who are individuals with disabilities and are living near a reservation or tribal service area are provided vocational rehabilitation services; and
- (C) Provisions for sharing resources in cooperative studies and assessments, joint training activities, and other collaborative activities designed to improve the provision of services to American Indians who are individuals with disabilities.

4.9 Methods of administration. (Section 101(a)(6) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.12, .19 and, .51(a) and (b))**(a) In general.**

The state agency employs methods of administration, including procedures to ensure accurate data collection and financial accountability, found by the commissioner to be necessary for the proper and efficient administration of the plan and for carrying out all the functions for which the state is responsible under the Plan and 34 CFR 361.

(b) Employment of individuals with disabilities.

The designated state agency and entities carrying out community rehabilitation programs in the state, who are in receipt of assistance under Part B of Title I of the Act and this State Plan, take affirmative action to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with disabilities covered under and on the same terms and conditions as set forth in Section 503 of the Act.

(c) Facilities.

Any facility used in connection with the delivery of services assisted under this State Plan meets program accessibility requirements consistent with the provisions, as applicable, of the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968, Section 504 of the Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the regulations implementing these laws.

4.10**Comprehensive system of personnel development.** (Section 101(a)(7) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.18)

Attachment 4.10 describes the designated state agency's procedures and activities to establish and maintain a comprehensive system of personnel development designed to ensure an adequate supply of qualified state rehabilitation professional and paraprofessional personnel for the designated state unit. The description includes the following:

(a) Data system on personnel and personnel development.

Development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on qualified personnel needs and personnel development with respect to:

(1) Qualified personnel needs.

- (A)** The number of personnel who are employed by the state agency in the provision of vocational rehabilitation services in relation to the number of individuals served, broken down by personnel category;
- (B)** The number of personnel currently needed by the state agency to provide vocational rehabilitation services, broken down by personnel category; and
- (C)** Projections of the number of personnel, broken down by personnel category, who will be needed by the state agency to provide vocational rehabilitation services in the state in 5 years based on projections of the number of individuals to be served, including individuals with significant disabilities, the number of personnel expected to retire or leave the field, and other relevant factors.

(2) **Personnel development.**

- (A) A list of the institutions of higher education in the state that are preparing vocational rehabilitation professionals, by type of program;
- (B) The number of students enrolled at each of those institutions, broken down by type of program; and
- (C) The number of students who graduated during the prior year from each of those institutions with certification or licensure, or with the credentials for certification or licensure, broken down by the personnel category for which they have received, or have the credentials to receive, certification or licensure.

(b) **Plan for recruitment, preparation, and retention of qualified personnel.**

Development, updating on an annual basis, and implementation of a plan to address the current and projected needs for qualified personnel based on the data collection and analysis system described in paragraph (a) of this subsection and that provides for the coordination and facilitation of efforts between the designated state unit and institutions of higher education and professional associations to recruit, prepare, and retain personnel who are qualified in accordance with paragraph (c) of this subsection, including personnel from minority backgrounds and personnel who are individuals with disabilities.

(c) **Personnel standards.**

Policies and procedures for the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards to ensure that designated state unit professional and paraprofessional personnel are appropriately and adequately prepared and trained, including:

- (1) Standards that are consistent with any national or state-approved or -recognized certification, licensing, registration, or, in the absence of these requirements, other comparable requirements (including state personnel requirements) that apply to the profession or discipline in which such personnel are providing vocational rehabilitation services.
- (2) To the extent that existing standards are not based on the highest requirements in the state applicable to a particular profession or discipline, the steps the state is currently taking and the steps the State Plans to take in accordance with the written plan to retrain or hire personnel within the designated state unit to meet standards that are based on the highest requirements in the state, including measures to notify designated state unit personnel, the

institutions of higher education identified in subparagraph (a)(2), and other public agencies of these steps and the timelines for taking each step.

(3) The written plan required by subparagraph (c)(2) describes the following:

- (A) Specific strategies for retraining, recruiting, and hiring personnel;
- (B) The specific time period by which all state unit personnel will meet the standards required by subparagraph (c)(1);
- (C) Procedures for evaluating the designated state unit's progress in hiring or retraining personnel to meet applicable personnel standards within the established time period; and
- (D) The identification of initial minimum qualifications that the designated state unit will require of newly hired personnel when the state unit is unable to hire new personnel who meet the established personnel standards and the identification of a plan for training such individuals to meet the applicable standards within the time period established for all state unit personnel to meet the established personnel standards.

(d) **Staff development.**

Policies, procedures, and activities to ensure that all personnel employed by the designated state unit receive appropriate and adequate training. The narrative describes the following:

- (1) A system of staff development for professionals and paraprofessionals within the designated state unit, particularly with respect to assessment, vocational counseling, job placement, and rehabilitation technology.
- (2) Procedures for the acquisition and dissemination to designated state unit professionals and paraprofessionals significant knowledge from research and other sources.
- (e) **Personnel to address individual communication needs.**
Availability of personnel within the designated state unit or obtaining the services of other individuals who are able to communicate in the native language of applicants or eligible individuals who have limited English speaking ability or in appropriate modes of communication with applicants or eligible individuals.
- (f) **Coordination of personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.**
Procedures and activities to coordinate the designated state unit's comprehensive system of personnel development with personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

4.11. **Statewide assessment; annual estimates; annual state goals and priorities; strategies; and progress reports.** (Sections 101(a)(15), 105(c)(2) and 625(b)(2) of the Act, 34 CFR 361.17(h)(2), .29, and 363.11(b))

(a) **Comprehensive statewide assessment.**

- (1) Attachment 4.11(a) documents the results of a comprehensive, statewide assessment, jointly conducted every 3 years by the designated state unit and the State Rehabilitation Council (if the state has such a Council). The assessment describes:
 - (A) The rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within the state, particularly the vocational rehabilitation services needs of:
 - (i) Individuals with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services;
 - (ii) Individuals with disabilities who are minorities and individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program carried out under this State Plan; and
 - (iii) Individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system.
 - (B) The need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the state.
- (2) For any year in which the state updates the assessments, the designated state unit submits to the commissioner a report containing information regarding updates to the assessments.
- (b) Annual estimates.

Attachment 4.11(b) identifies on an annual basis state estimates of the:

 - (1) Number of individuals in the state who are eligible for services under the Plan;
 - (2) Number of eligible individuals who will receive services provided with funds provided under Part B of Title I of the Act and under Part B of Title VI of the Act, including, if the designated state agency uses an order of selection in accordance with subparagraph 5.3(b)(2) of this State Plan, estimates of the number of individuals to be served under each priority category within the order; and
 - (3) Costs of the services described in subparagraph (b)(1), including, if the designated state agency uses an order of selection, the service costs for each priority category within the order.
- (c) Goals and priorities.
 - (1) Attachment 4.11(c)(1) identifies the goals and priorities of the state that are jointly developed or revised, as applicable, with and agreed to by the State Rehabilitation Council, if the agency has a Council, in carrying out the vocational rehabilitation and supported employment programs.
 - (2) The designated state agency submits to the commissioner a report containing information regarding any revisions in the goals and priorities for any year the state revises the goals and priorities.
 - (3) Order of selection.

If the state agency implements an order of selection, consistent with subparagraph 5.3(b)(2) of the State Plan,

Attachment 4.11(c)(3):

- (A) Shows the order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided vocational rehabilitation services;
- (B) Provides a justification for the order; and
- (C) Identifies the service and outcome goals, and the time within which these goals may be achieved for individuals in each priority category within the order.
- (4) **Goals and plans for distribution of Title VI, Part B funds.**
Attachment 4.11(c)(4) specifies, consistent with subsection 6.4 of the State Plan supplement, the state's goals and priorities with respect to the distribution of funds received under Section 622 of the Act for the provision of supported employment services.
- (d) **Strategies.**
 - (1) Attachment 4.11(d) describes the strategies, including:
 - (A) The methods to be used to expand and improve services to individuals with disabilities, including how a broad range of assistive technology services and assistive technology devices will be provided to those individuals at each stage of the rehabilitation process and how those services and devices will be provided to individuals with disabilities on a statewide basis;
 - (B) Outreach procedures to identify and serve individuals with disabilities who are minorities, including those with the most significant disabilities in accordance with subsection 6.6 of the State Plan supplement, and individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program;
 - (C) As applicable, the plan of the state for establishing, developing, or improving community rehabilitation programs;
 - (D) Strategies to improve the performance of the state with respect to the evaluation standards and performance indicators established pursuant to Section 106 of the Act; and
 - (E) Strategies for assisting other components of the statewide workforce investment system in assisting individuals with disabilities.
 - (2) Attachment 4.11 (d) describes how the designated state agency uses these strategies to:
 - (A) Address the needs identified in the assessment conducted under paragraph 4.11(a) and achieve the goals and priorities identified in the State Plan attachments under paragraph 4.11(c);
 - (B) Support the innovation and expansion activities identified in subparagraph 4.12(a)(1) and (2) of the Plan; and
 - (C) Overcome identified barriers relating to equitable access to and participation of individuals with disabilities in the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Supported Employment Services Program.

(e) **Evaluation and reports of progress.**

- (1) The designated state unit and the State Rehabilitation Council, if the state unit has a Council, jointly submits to the commissioner an annual report on the results of an evaluation of the effectiveness of the vocational rehabilitation program and the progress made in improving the effectiveness of the program from the previous year.

(2) **Attachment 4.11(e)(2):**

- (A) Provides an evaluation of the extent to which the goals identified in Attachment 4.11(c)(1) and, if applicable, Attachment 4.11(c)(3) were achieved;
- (B) Identifies the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals and priorities;
- (C) Describes the factors that impeded their achievement, to the extent they were not achieved;
- (D) Assesses the performance of the state on the standards and indicators established pursuant to Section 106 of the Act; and
- (E) Provides a report consistent with paragraph 4.12(c) of the plan on how the funds reserved for innovation and expansion activities were utilized in the preceding year.

4.12 Innovation and expansion. (Section 101(a)(18) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.35)

- (a) The designated state agency reserves and uses a portion of the funds allotted to the state under Section 110 of the Act for the:
- (1) Development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities under this State Plan, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities, consistent with the findings of the statewide assessment identified in Attachment 4.11(a) and goals and priorities of the state identified in Attachments 4.11(c)(1) and, if applicable, Attachment 4.11(c)(3); and
- (2) Support of the funding for the State Rehabilitation Council, if the state has such a Council, consistent with the resource plan prepared under Section 105(d)(1) of the Act and 34 CFR 361.17(i), and the funding of the Statewide Independent Living Council, consistent with the resource plan prepared under Section 705(e)(1) of the Act and 34 CFR 364.21(i).
- (b) Attachment 4.11 (d) describes how the reserved funds identified in subparagraph 4.12(a)(1) and (2) will be utilized.
- (c) Attachment 4.11(e)(2) describes how the reserved funds were utilized in the preceding year.

4.13 Reports. (Section 101(a)(10) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.40)

- (a) The designated state unit submits reports in the form and level of detail and at the time required by the commissioner regarding applicants for and eligible individuals receiving services under the State Plan.

- (b) Information submitted in the reports provides a complete count, unless sampling techniques are used, of the applicants and eligible individuals in a manner that permits the greatest possible cross-classification of data and protects the confidentiality of the identity of each individual.

SECTION 5: ADMINISTRATION OF THE PROVISION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES

- 5.1 Information and referral services.** (Sections 101(a)(5)(D) and (20) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.37)
The designated state agency has implemented an information and referral system that is adequate to ensure that individuals with disabilities, including individuals who do not meet the agency's order of selection criteria for receiving vocational rehabilitation services, if the agency is operating on an order of selection, are provided accurate vocational rehabilitation information and guidance, including counseling and referral for job placement, using appropriate modes of communication, to assist such individuals in preparing for, securing, retaining, or regaining employment, and are referred to other appropriate federal and state programs, including other components of the statewide workforce investment system in the state.
- 5.2 Residency.** (Section 101(a)(12) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.42(c)(1))
The designated state unit imposes no duration of residence requirement as part of determining an individual's eligibility for vocational rehabilitation services or that excludes from services under the plan any individual who is present in the state.
- 5.3 Ability to serve all eligible individuals; order of selection for services.** (Sections 12(d) and 101(a)(5) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.36)
- (a) The designated state unit is able to provide the full range of services listed in Section 103(a) of the Act and 34 CFR 361.48, as appropriate, to all eligible individuals with disabilities in the state who apply for services.
X Yes No
- (b) If "No":
- (1) Individuals with the most significant disabilities, in accordance with criteria established by the state, are selected first for vocational rehabilitation services before other individuals with disabilities.
- (2) **Attachment 4.11(c)(3):**
- (A) Shows the order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided vocational rehabilitation services;
- (B) Provides a justification for the order of selection; and
- (C) Identifies the state's service and outcome goals and the time within which these goals may be achieved for individuals in each priority category within the order.
- (3) Eligible individuals who do not meet the order of selection criteria have access to the services provided through the designated state unit's information and referral system established under Section 101(a)(20) of the Act, 34 CFR 361.37, and subsection 5.1 of this State Plan.
- 5.4 Availability of comparable services and benefits.** (Sections 101(a)(8) and 103(a) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.53)

- (a) Prior to providing any vocational rehabilitation services, except those services identified in paragraph (b), to an eligible individual, or to members of the individual's family, the state unit determines whether comparable services and benefits exist under any other program and whether those services and benefits are available to the individual.
- (b) The following services are exempt from a determination of the availability of comparable services and benefits:
- (1) Assessment for determining eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs by qualified personnel, including, if appropriate, an assessment by personnel skilled in rehabilitation technology;
 - (2) Counseling and guidance, including information and support services to assist an individual in exercising informed choice consistent with the provisions of Section 102(d) of the Act;
 - (3) Referral and other services to secure needed services from other agencies, including other components of the statewide workforce investment system, through agreements developed under Section 101(a)(11) of the Act, if such services are not available under this State Plan;
 - (4) Job-related services, including job search and placement assistance, job retention services, follow-up services, and follow-along services;
 - (5) Rehabilitation technology, including telecommunications, sensory, and other technological aids and devices; and
 - (6) Post-employment services consisting of the services listed under subparagraphs (1) through (5) of this paragraph.
- (c) The requirements of paragraph (a) of this section do not apply if the determination of the availability of comparable services and benefits under any other program would interrupt or delay:
- (1) Progress of the individual toward achieving the employment outcome identified in the individualized plan for employment;
 - (2) An immediate job placement; or
 - (3) Provision of vocational rehabilitation services to any individual who is determined to be at extreme medical risk, based on medical evidence provided by an appropriate qualified medical professional.
- (d) The governor in consultation with the designated state vocational rehabilitation agency and other appropriate agencies ensures that an interagency agreement or other mechanism for interagency coordination that meets the requirements of Section 101(a)(8)(B)(i)-(iv) of the Act takes effect between the designated state unit and any appropriate public entity, including the state Medicaid program, a public institution of higher education, and a component of the statewide workforce investment system to ensure the provision of the vocational rehabilitation services identified in Section 103(a) of the Act and 34 CFR 361.48, other than the services identified in paragraph (b) of this section, that are included in the individualized plan for employment of an eligible individual, including the provision of those vocational rehabilitation services during the pendency of any dispute that may arise in the implementation of the interagency agreement or other mechanism for interagency coordination.

5.5 Individualized plan for employment. (Section 101(a)(9) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.45 and .46)

- (a) An individualized plan for employment meeting the requirements of Section 102(b) of the Act and 34 CFR 361.45 and .46 is developed and implemented in a timely manner for each individual determined to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services, except if the state has implemented an order of selection, an individualized plan for employment is developed and implemented for each individual to whom the designated state unit is able to provide vocational rehabilitation services.
- (b) Services to an eligible individual are provided in accordance with the provisions of the individualized plan for employment.
- 5.6 Opportunity to make informed choices regarding the selection of services and providers.** (Sections 101(a)(19) and 102(d) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.52)
- Applicants and eligible individuals, or, as appropriate, their representatives, are provided information and support services to assist in exercising informed choice throughout the rehabilitation process, consistent with the provisions of Section 102(d) of the Act and 34 CFR 361.52.

5.7**Services to American Indians.** (Section 101(a)(13) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.30)

The designated state unit provides vocational rehabilitation services to American Indians who are individuals with disabilities residing in the state to the same extent as the designated state agency provides such services to other significant populations of individuals with disabilities residing in the state.

5.8**Annual review of individuals in extended employment or other employment under special certificate provisions of the fair labor standards act of 1938.** (Section 101(a)(14) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.55)

- (a) The designated state unit conducts an annual review and reevaluation of the status of each individual with a disability served under this State Plan:
- (1) Who has achieved an employment outcome in which the individual is compensated in accordance with Section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act (29 U.S.C. 214(c)); or
- (2) Whose record of services is closed while the individual is in extended employment on the basis that the individual is unable to achieve an employment outcome in an integrated setting or that the individual made an informed choice to remain in extended employment.
- (b) The designated state unit carries out the annual review and reevaluation for 2 years after the individual's record of services is closed (and thereafter if requested by the individual or, if appropriate, the individual's representative), to determine the interests, priorities, and needs of the individual with respect to competitive employment or training for competitive employment.

- (c) The designated state unit makes maximum efforts, including the identification and provision of vocational rehabilitation services, reasonable accommodations, and other necessary support services, to assist the individuals described in paragraph (a) in engaging in competitive employment.
 - (d) The individual with a disability, or, if appropriate, the individual's representative, has input into the review and reevaluation, and through signed acknowledgement attests that the review and reevaluation have been conducted.
- 5.9 Use of Title I funds for construction of facilities.** (Sections 101(a)(17) and 103(b)(2)(A) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.49(a)(1), .61 and .62(b))
- If the state elects to construct, under special circumstances, facilities for community rehabilitation programs, the following requirements are met:
- (a) The federal share of the cost of construction for facilities for a fiscal year does not exceed an amount equal to 10 percent of the state's allotment under Section 110 of the Act for that fiscal year.
 - (b) The provisions of Section 306 of the Act that were in effect prior to the enactment of the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998 apply to such construction.
 - (c) There is compliance with the requirements in 34 CFR 361.62(b) that ensure the use of the construction authority will not reduce the efforts of the designated state agency in providing other vocational rehabilitation services, other than the establishment of facilities for community rehabilitation programs.
- 5.10 Contracts and cooperative agreements.** (Section 101(a)(24) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.31 and .32)
- (a) **Contracts with for-profit organizations.**
The designated state agency has the authority to enter into contracts with for-profit organizations for the purpose of providing, as vocational rehabilitation services, on-the-job training and related programs for individuals with disabilities under Part A of Title VI of the Act, upon the determination by the designated state agency that for-profit organizations are better qualified to provide vocational rehabilitation services than non-profit agencies and organizations.
 - (b) **Cooperative agreements with private non-profit organizations.**
Attachment 4.8(b)(3) describes the manner in which the designated state agency establishes cooperative agreements with private non-profit vocational rehabilitation service providers.

STATE PLAN SUPPLEMENT FOR THE STATE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROGRAM**SECTION 6: PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION**

- 6.1 Designated state agency.** (Section 625(b)(1) of the Act; 34 CFR 363.11(a))
The designated state agency for vocational rehabilitation services identified in paragraph 1.2 of the Title I State Plan is the state agency designated to administer the State Supported Employment Services Program authorized under Title VI, Part B of the Act.
- 6.2 Statewide assessment of supported employment services needs.** (Section 625(b)(2) of the Act; 34 CFR 363.11(b))
Attachment 4.11(a) describes the results of the comprehensive, statewide needs assessment conducted under Section 101(a)(15)(a)(1) of the Act and subparagraph 4.11(a)(1) of the Title I State Plan with respect to the rehabilitation needs of individuals with most significant disabilities and their need for supported employment services, including needs related to coordination.
- 6.3 Quality, scope, and extent of supported employment services.** (Section 625(b)(3) of the Act; 34 CFR 363.11(c) and 50(b)(2))
Attachment 6.3 describes the quality, scope, and extent of supported employment services to be provided to individuals with the most significant disabilities who are eligible to receive supported employment services. The description also addresses the timing of the transition to extended services to be provided by relevant state agencies, private non-profit organizations, or other sources following the cessation of supported employment service provided by the designated state agency.
- 6.4 Goals and plans for distribution of Title VI, Part B funds.** (Section 625(b)(3) of the Act; 34 CFR 363.11(d) and .20)
Attachment 4.11(c)(4) identifies the state's goals and plans with respect to the distribution of funds received under Section 622 of the Act.
- 6.5 Evidence of collaboration with respect to supported employment services and extended services.** (Sections 625(b)(4) and (5) of the Act; 34 CFR 363.11(e))
Attachment 4.8(b)(4) describes the efforts of the designated state agency to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other state agencies and other appropriate entities to assist in the provision of supported employment services and other public or nonprofit agencies or organizations within the state, employers, natural supports, and other entities with respect to the provision of extended services.

6.6 Minority outreach. (34 CFR 363.11(f))

Attachment 4.11(d) includes a description of the designated state agency's outreach procedures for identifying and serving individuals with the most significant disabilities who are minorities.

6.7**Reports.** (Sections 625(b)(8) and 626 of the Act; 34 CFR 363.11(h) and .52)

The designated state agency submits reports in such form and in accordance with such procedures as the commissioner may require and collects the information required by Section 101(a)(10) of the Act separately for individuals receiving supported employment services under Part B of Title VI and individuals receiving supported employment services under Title I of the Act.

SECTION 7: FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

- 7.1 Five percent limitation on administrative costs.** (Section 625(b)(7) of the Act; 34 CFR 363.11(g)(8))
The designated state agency expends no more than five percent of the state's allotment under Section 622 of the Act for administrative costs in carrying out the State Supported Employment Services Program.
- 7.2 Use of funds in providing services.** (Sections 623 and 625(b)(6)(A) and (D) of the Act; 34 CFR 363.6(c)(2)(iv), .11(g)(1) and (4))
- (a)** Funds made available under Title VI, Part B of the Act are used by the designated state agency only to provide supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities who are eligible to receive such services.
 - (b)** Funds provided under Title VI, Part B are used only to supplement, and not supplant, the funds provided under Title I, Part B, of the Act, in providing supported employment services specified in the individualized plan for employment.
 - (c)** Funds provided under Part B of Title VI or Title I of the Act are not used to provide extended services to individuals who are eligible under Part B of Title VI or Title I of the Act.

SECTION 8: PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

- 8.1 Scope of supported employment services.** (Sections 7(36) and 625(b)(6)(F) and (G) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.5(b)(54), 363.11(g)(6) and (7))
- (a) Supported employment services are those services as defined in Section 7(36) of the Act and 34 CFR 361.5(b)(54).
 - (b) To the extent job skills training is provided, the training is provided on-site.
 - (c) Supported employment services include placement in an integrated setting for the maximum number of hours possible based on the unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice of individuals with the most significant disabilities.
- 8.2 Comprehensive assessments of individuals with significant disabilities.** (Sections 7(2)(B) and 625(b)(6)(B); 34 CFR 361.5(b)(6)(ii) and 363.11(g)(2))
- The comprehensive assessment of individuals with significant disabilities conducted under Section 102(b)(1) of the Act and funded under Title I of the Act includes consideration of supported employment as an appropriate employment outcome.
- 8.3 Individualized plan for employment.** (Sections 102(b)(3)(F) and 625(b)(6)(C) and (E) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.46(b) and 363.11(g)(3) and (5))
- (a) An individualized plan for employment that meets the requirements of Section 102(b) of the Act and 34 CFR 361.45 and .46 is developed and updated using funds under Title I.
 - (b) The individualized plan for employment:
 - (1) Specifies the supported employment services to be provided;
 - (2) Describes the expected extended services needed; and
 - (3) Identifies the source of extended services, including natural supports, or, to the extent that it is not possible to identify the source of extended services at the time the individualized plan for employment plan is developed, a statement describing the basis for concluding that there is a reasonable expectation that sources will become available.
 - (c) Services provided under an individualized plan for employment are coordinated with services provided under other individualized plans established under other federal or state programs.

Attachment 4.2(c)

Summary of Input and Recommendations of the State Rehabilitation Council; Response of the Designated State Unit; and Explanations for Rejection of Input or Recommendations

The State of Alaska has a State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) consistent with Section 105 the Act and 34 CFR 361.17. In Alaska, the Governor's Committee on Employment and Rehabilitation of People with Disabilities (GCERPD) serves as the SRC. The GCERPD holds quarterly face-to-face meetings at various locations throughout the State thus enabling them to gain a comprehensive, first hand understanding of the statewide vocational rehabilitation program.

Throughout the past fiscal year, the GCERPD has:

1. Collaborated with ADVR on the development of the State Plan. The Chair of the GCERPD and the Director of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation are co-signatories on the State Plan;
2. Conducted public forums in both urban and rural areas of the State garnering consumer satisfaction with the services of ADVR;
3. Participated in ADVR's strategic planning process giving input on the division's goals and strategies;
4. Set goals for its various sub-committees to further the mission of ADVR;
5. Established a new sub-committee to administer the federal assistive technology (AT) grant and address the AT functions of the Division; and
6. Advised ADVR on the development of and implementation of revisions to ADVR policies and procedures;
7. Provided recommendations to ADVR on under-served populations groups; and
8. Sponsored the Governor's Annual Disability Award Ceremony acknowledging individuals and employers who promote the employment of individuals with disabilities.
9. Collaborated with the Governor's Council on Disability and Special Education through GCERPD member participation in workshops and Disability Summits.
10. Contacted various professional organizations such as Rotary and Chambers of Commerce to promote employment of people with disabilities.

11. Conducted outreach efforts to recruit new members to the GCERPD.
12. Identified areas for collaboration between the GCERPD and other statewide disability related advisory councils, committees, commissions and boards including the SILC and the Tribal consortium.
13. Began work on revising the consumer satisfaction survey.

Recommendations made to ADVR by the GCERPD

Recommendation: The Governor's Committee has heard, through public testimony at numerous meetings, that there are large numbers of unserved and/or undiagnosed individuals (especially students at transition age) with FASD. Therefore, the Governor's Committee strongly recommends that when the Division conducts their next three year comprehensive statewide assessment of the rehabilitation needs of individuals in Alaska, they focus on the unmet needs of individuals with FASD.

In addition, the Governor's Committee encourages the Division to contact the Division of Behavioral Health and the Department of Education for data and additional information the State may have previously gathered on FASD and other rehabilitation needs

ADVR's Response: ADVR acknowledges that FASD is a significant issue in Alaska and will include both your concerns and information from other sources on FASD in the needs assessment in the FY 2008 State Plan. ADVR also believes that conducting a comprehensive assessment or survey of the number of FASD students and the services available or not available to them is beyond the scope of our staff resources. This type of tracking and research falls under auspices of the State Office of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (www.hss.state.ak.us/fas) through their comprehensive FAS project. ADVR believes there is a preponderance of information readily available via the web and other sources detailing the impact of FASD and the pressure on the service delivery systems.

The approach ADVR believes that best utilizes our resources, falls within the scope of our mission, and immediately addresses the needs of FASD students is through staff training and staff participation on boards and in groups who are also concerned with the impact and prevention of FASD.

DVR is proactively doing the following regarding FASD:

1. Training VR counselors utilizing a variety of sources. Topics covered include the behavioral phenotype and challenges, resources available, aspects of diagnosis, strategies for behavioral techniques, and developing person-specific accommodations. Recent trainings include:
 - November 2006, "Vocational Assistance for Persons who have Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder";
 - January 2007, FASD Training; and

- February 2007, "An Overwhelming Opportunity" and

2. Staff participation on the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education, The Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, and The Alaska Mental Health Board.

GCERPD's Response: The GCERPD accepted ADVR's response to their recommendation commenting ADVR is being proactive in its approach.

Analysis of Consumer Satisfaction

In accordance with 34 CFR 361.17 (h) (4), the GCERPD reviews and analyzes the effectiveness of and the consumer satisfaction with the vocational rehabilitation services. The consumer satisfaction information is collected through public forums and from surveys which are available in all VR offices statewide to all individuals at any time during the VR process.

Ninety-seven percent of the respondents from the survey were satisfied with the way they were treated by the ADVR staff and would recommend ADVR to friends or family. The need for increased services from all state agencies in rural Alaska was expressed, as well as the need for agencies to collaborate.

Comments taken at the public forums came from both employers and individuals receiving VR services. The following represent the recurring themes of the comments:

- The community understands that everybody benefits when people with disabilities are living their lives as fully as possible.
- The resources that DVR offers to meet the needs of employees are a great asset. More employers ought to utilize the program. I'm an employer and I love it!
- These are opportunities I never would have had without this program.
- People in rural Alaska utilize vocational rehabilitation services too, it just takes a different approach....a collaborative approach.
- Vocational Rehabilitation has done a lot more than just provide me the funds and tuition to make this possible. They have provided me with support, they have been there every time I called and lent more than just a sympathetic ear, but solutions.
- Educating other service providers how to work with people with disabilities takes all the scariness away.
- This program makes sure you have everything you need to succeed. These skills prove to be useful your entire life and that's something that can never be taken away or replaced.

- His DVR counselor helped Peter get out of the special education room at school and out into the public where he could learn and work on life skills. He now works at a grocery store. She made sure we knew our rights and proved that Peter could be mainstreamed into daily life and work routine like everyone else.

GCERPD Focus Areas for Federal FY2007

1. Collaborate with the Governor's Council on Disability and Special Education, the Alaska Mental Health Board, the Advisory Board on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse and other statewide entities who have a related interest to individuals with disabilities.
2. Promote the employment of people with disabilities by making presentations to employers; working with DVR to improve internet access on the hiring of individuals with disabilities; and actively promoting employer partnerships.
3. Promote early assessment, evaluation, identification and use of assistive technology for youth.
4. Develop youth involvement with assistive technology, leadership, and community involvement.
5. Develop strategies to increase resources to enable consumers to access and acquire appropriate assistive technology.
6. Revise and implement the consumer satisfaction survey and process.

Attachment 4.8(b)(1)

Cooperation with Agencies Not Carrying Out Activities under the Statewide Workforce Investment System

1. ADVR is coordinating with the Department of Corrections on the implementation of their Assess, Plan, Implement, and Coordinate model. The goal of this model is to develop a multi-dimensional systems approach to the transition of offenders with mental illness and co-occurring disorders from correctional institution into the community.
2. ADVR works closely with the Coordinated Resources Project (CRP) which is also known as the Anchorage Mental Health Court. The mission of the CRP is to divert people with mental disabilities charged with misdemeanor offenses from incarceration and into community treatment and services including mental health counseling and vocational rehabilitation as appropriate in order to prevent further contacts with the criminal justice system.
3. ADVR and the Employment Security Division are in the process of developing an interagency agreement with the Department of Veterans Affairs, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Division. This agreement provides for the cooperation, coordination, and collaboration among the agencies to increase the vocational opportunities for veterans by including other vocational rehabilitation providers in a comprehensive system of case management.
4. ADVR has no cooperative agreements with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Development. USDA Rural Development in Alaska provides loans and grants for housing, community facilities, and utilities, and to rural businesses and cooperatives. Projects such as the Fairbanks Behavioral Health Center provide resources for all individuals including ADVR consumers.

Attachment 4.8(b)(2)

Coordination with Education Officials

The Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (ADVR) has cooperative agreements with all levels of educational institutions within the State including local school districts, the State Department of Education and Early Development (DEED), and the University of Alaska statewide system. The purpose of these agreements is to outline the responsibilities of all entities involved with either the transition from high school or the education of those individuals with disabilities.

1. The Department of Education and Early Development, Division of Special Education and ADVR have an interagency agreement which is designed to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from receipt of educational services in school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services.

The agreement includes:

- ADVR's assurance of the development and implementation of an IPE for each student determined to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services before the student leaves school.
- Designation of a regional ADVR contact that is responsible for clarifying questions and concerns relating to the implementation of the agreements with local school districts.
- ADVR's assurance that the core tenets, principles, and career goals stated in each student's IEP will be incorporated into the development of their Individualized Plan for Employment.

ADVR also has an agreement with DEED whereby DEED funds DVR summer internships for special education teachers.

2. ADVR has memorandums of understanding or cooperative agreements with all of Alaska's fifty-four school districts.

The purpose of the agreements is to provide comprehensive, coordinated services to meet the special educational transitioning needs of students age 16 to 21. Through interagency planning the intention is to eliminate duplication of services, promote the most efficient use of resources, clarify agency roles and responsibilities, and offer quality transitioning plans thereby assuring continuous, well-coordinated services for young adults and their families.

The agreements address:

- Referrals to ADVR;
- The assessment responsibilities of the schools and ADVR;
- The programmatic responsibilities each party has, such as the school's role in

educating the students with disabilities through the age of twenty-one and ADVR's role in providing technical assistance to the schools for IEP development and when appropriate, vocational support; and

- The financial responsibilities of the schools and ADVR.

3. ADVR has a memorandum of understanding with the University of Alaska statewide system delineating the responsibilities of each entity regarding individuals with disabilities who are served by ADVR and who are enrolled as students within the University of Alaska statewide system.

The agreement includes:

- The roles of each party;
- The financial and programmatic responsibilities
- The legal basis for the agreement; and
- The method for resolving disputes.

Attachment 4.8(b)(3)

Cooperative Agreements with Private Nonprofit Organizations

The Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (ADVR) has implemented a Service Provider Agreement as the instrument for establishing agreements with private non-profit organizations providing rehabilitation services. ADVR does not have formal cooperative agreements with any private non-profit vocational rehabilitation service providers.

The Service Provider Agreement:

- Assess the providers' qualifications such as advanced education and employment experience which documents their ability to work successfully with individuals with disabilities to enhance their employability.
- States the service provider's fees for services.
- Outlines the conditions and guidelines under which the division and the service provider will provide services for individuals with disabilities specifying the responsibilities of each party. The scope of services, evaluation criteria, reporting and billing requirements are clearly outlined.
- Outlines standards for service providers including: organizational structure, personnel; fiscal management; health, safety, and accessibility; and indemnity and insurance requirements.

The Community Rehabilitation Program Specialist approves the Agreements which are issued for a three year period. If changes in key personnel are made during this period, the information must be submitted to the Division for review. Fees may be negotiated annually.

Information from the Service Provider Agreements is summarized and provided to field offices for use by the counseling staff in apprising consumers of the service options which are available in their community. Consistent with provisions of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the informed choices of individuals, ADVR contracts for rehabilitation services in the most integrated settings possible. Negotiation for specific, individualized, services which are responsive to the expressed goals of the consumer and relevant to the IPE provide assurance to both the individual and the Division that this goal will be met.

Attachment 4.8(b)(4)

Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of Supported Employment Services

Collaborative efforts exist between ADVR, the Division of Behavioral Health, the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education, the University of Alaska Affiliated program (the Center for Human Development), and the Division of Senior and Disability Services (DSDS) to provide extended services to those supported employment consumers leaving the VR program.

The Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education functions as the State Council on Developmental Disabilities and works to build capacity, plans for systems change, and advocates for change for people with disabilities. System change focuses of system changes include housing, employment, early intervention, special education, lifelong learning, independent living and inclusion in the community. ADVR's Chief of Field Services is an active member of this council.

DSDS maintains the developmentally disabled register which is in essence the wait list for long term support services. ADVR is in the process of renewing a memorandum of understanding with DSDS.

The Mental Health Board and the Governor's Advisory Board on Alcohol and Drug Abuse have combined to plan and advocate for policies, programs and services that help Alaskans who have a mental illness or substance abuse issues. ADVR has a staff member on this board.

In addition, ADVR has an on-going commitment to quality supported employment services as evidenced by the recent formation of a high level committee including the ADVR Chief of Field Services and the Executive Director of the Governor's Council on Disabilities to evaluate the current level of supported employment services available. ADVR has also implemented a five-year, system change a customized employment grant that focuses on wrap-around services for the most severely disabled.

Attachment 4.10

Comprehensive System for Personnel Development Plan

In recognition of the complexity of assuring quality service while responding to the demands of a changing environment, the Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (ADVR) employs a continuous improvement approach to organizational development. Founded upon a strategy of building organizational capacity through the realization of individual potential, the key components of the model include: continuous learning, developing capacity through personal and professional development; and the belief that when employees are trained with the skills and abilities to make decisions about the management of their work, the result is greater organizational effectiveness. Within this context, ADVR has created a comprehensive system of personnel development, assuring the maintenance of a team of qualified professionals and paraprofessionals appropriate to the service needs of Alaskans with disabilities.

Data System of Personnel and Personnel Development

ADVR annually collects and evaluates data pertinent to the personnel recruitment and development of the organization. Narrative, statistical, and anecdotal information are gleaned from individual and regional case reviews (including client satisfaction surveys and consumer forums); performance evaluations; training need surveys; individual employee development plans; ADVR's strategic plan; CAP annual reports; and public comments obtained in public hearings and testimony received by the Governor's Committee on Employment and Rehabilitation of People with Disabilities (GCERPD).

ADVR's Training and Staff Development (TSD) team, led by the Assistant Chief of Field Services, analyzes the data collected to identify the professional development needs of division staff. This team evaluates the cost and benefit of training and development activities and plans training that is relevant to the enhancement of the capabilities of ADVR staff and is responsible for developing plans for individual and group training. The TSD team also works closely with Tribal VR programs to collaborate on training activities.

Qualified Personnel Needs: ADVR currently has adequate professional and paraprofessional support staff to serve all eligible consumers. Caseload size is monitored on a monthly basis by the Field Services Management Council in order to maintain manageable caseloads and to ensure quality service. The mix of paraprofessional and professional staff is analyzed on a regular basis throughout the year to ensure personnel are appropriately placed.

ADVR staff and caseload statistics are as follows:

The following reflects the high level of commitment to personnel development:

- ADVR has 39 counseling positions:
 - Twenty-two counselors are CRCs;

- Nine individuals are in graduate programs working towards a Master's degree in rehabilitation counseling;
- Two individuals are eligible to sit for the CRC;
- One individual will begin a graduate program this coming fiscal year;
- Three individuals have not yet committed to a graduate program; and
- Two positions are currently vacant.
- ADVR has 26 paraprofessional positions in support of counselors
- At mid-year, the caseload size ranged from 43 – 101 with the average being 64
- ADVR has six evaluator positions:
 - One individual is a CRC;
 - One individual is eligible to sit for the CVE; and
 - Three individuals enrolled in academic programs for CVE or CRC certification.

ADVR's client base has remained relatively constant for the past few years. With the current strong Alaskan economy projected to continue for coming years, we do not expect to see a dramatic influx of clients. Therefore, we anticipate our current staffing patterns will be adequate to serve all individuals over the next five years.

Even so, ADVR does anticipate a continued problem with hiring CRC counselors and foresees the need to support staff in graduate programs. We also project a minimum of 25% staff turnover due to retirement and normal departures.

Personnel Development: Alaska does not have an institution of higher education that offers rehabilitation coursework leading to a Master degree. The University of Alaska offers programs leading to Human Services Applied Associates and Bachelor degrees. DVR paraprofessional staff enrolls in programs through this institution on a regular basis.

ADVR has and continues to support ADVR staff in distance education graduate programs in rehabilitation counseling in order to meet the CRC certification requirements. Of the nine counselors enrolled in graduate rehabilitation counseling programs, five are associated with Western Washington University (WWU) and four with the University of Arkansas at Little Rock (ULAR). During the year, two staff members completed their course work at UALR and one at WWU. In addition, three para-professionals are working on degrees from WWU and ULAR in vocational rehabilitation counseling.

Plan for Recruitment, Preparation and Retention of Qualified Personnel

ADVR may experience the loss of over 20 experienced professional staff over the next five years due to retirement. No Alaska university has a graduate program in rehabilitation counseling, therefore, distance education opportunities are highly utilized by ADVR staff. The specific lack of higher education in the State has created challenges for the recruitment of qualified rehabilitation counselors. Out-of-state recruitment is also challenging as Alaskan salaries have not kept pace with some parts of the country.

Staff recruitment is conducted in accordance with the provisions of Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The State of Alaska employment statutes provide for "provisional hire" which allows ADVR, as well as other state agencies, an additional opportunity to take affirmative action to employ individuals with disabilities. ADVR counselors when appropriate, encourage ADVR clients to pursue careers in rehabilitation. Currently, three of our counselors were previous ADVR clients and 35% are individuals with a disability.

ADVR makes every effort to recruit and employ individuals with diverse ethnic backgrounds. Currently 14% of our counselors are from minority backgrounds including Alaskan Natives, Hispanic, African Americans, and Asian.

ADVR utilizes several recruitment strategies in addition to provisional hire. One of the more successful strategies is to hire rehabilitation associates and then assist them in obtaining the education and certification required to become a qualified rehabilitation counselor. ADVR also hires and recruits individuals with Master's degrees in Counseling and assists them with obtaining the core rehabilitation course work to become eligible to sit for the CRC examination.

This same strategy is often successful with paraprofessional staff. ADVR also recruits from Tribal VR programs, community rehabilitation and social service internship programs. ADVR also offers paid or non-paid internships to rehabilitation counseling graduate students interested in relocating to Alaska. ADVR has also participated in the Region X recruitment initiative. The Division of Personnel is the final stages of completing a reclassification study of the VR counseling and para-professional positions. Preliminary results of the study indicate that salaries for VR counselors will increase which should help our recruitment efforts.

Personnel Standards

The Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) requires ADVR to establish personnel standards that assure personnel are adequately prepared and trained. Strategies developed by ADVR to ensure the retraining, recruiting and hiring of personnel include:

- Attendance at local career fairs;
- Updating marketing tools;
- Formation of an in-house training and staff development team;
- Offering paid and non-paid graduate internships;
- Supporting rehabilitation counseling as an employment goal for clients;
- Supporting staff to obtain the academics requirements by CRC;
- Providing CRC accredited training to maintain CRC certification and to provide for general staff development;
- Utilizes the training resources and support of the Region X Rehabilitation Continuing Education Program (RCEP) and the Center for Continuing Education in Rehabilitation (CCER).
- Presentations to graduate level counseling students; and

- The development of a career advancement system that integrates educational and credentialing required and measures knowledge and skills in hiring and promotional consideration. This system is consistent with the national certification of rehabilitation counselors.

The State of Alaska does not require State licensure requirements for rehabilitation counseling, therefore, ADVR has adopted the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC) academic degree requirements.

ADVR expects that newly hired personnel who do not meet the CRC academic requirements will do so within six years of employment. During this six year period, these employees are closely supervised by CRCs and are not considered rehabilitation professionals. At a minimum, newly hired personnel must have a Bachelor's degree.

ADVR has provided existing personnel the opportunity to participate in rehabilitation counseling graduate programs. The expectation is that all coursework will be completed within a five year time period. Three staff members have not completed all required coursework within the allotted timeframe. All of these individuals are within five years of retirement. ADVR continues to provide on-going training and monitoring of these individuals, but is focusing limited graduate training resources on new staff.

As part of ADVR's strategic planning process, an annual evaluation of the effectiveness of ADVR's recruitment and training practices is completed. Strategies to improve recruitment and training are identified and incorporated in the plan.

Staff Development

Annual comprehensive human resource training and development plans are based on the needs assessment process, budget availability, new federal initiatives, and outcomes of program evaluations. Needs assessment includes information from individual and regional case reviews, client satisfaction surveys and consumer forums, performance appraisals, performance skill rating tools, employee staff development plans, organizational plans, CAP annual reports and supervisor and employee training needs surveys. Each individual in the agency has an employee development plan that is updated on a regular basis. As part of the process, data is compiled by the training and staff development specialist and used in determining group and individual training activities.

In-service training recently delivered to all staff includes:

- Overview of comprehensive assessment;
- Labor Market Surveys and Transferable Skills Analysis;
- Negotiating with Employers, job placement strategies for individuals with psychiatric disabilities;
- Assistive technology throughout the VR process
- Decision making and coping skills techniques and strategies
- Counseling skills and informed choice; and

- Blind and visually impaired.

Training activities for ADVR staff are also coordinated with WIA partners through Job Centers. There is a statewide training team of Job Center participants of which ADVR is a member. ADVR staff are trained on issues affecting our clients such as individualized training accounts. ADVR in turn has provided training to Job Center partners on assistive technology and disability related issues.

To keep counselors and paraprofessionals current on the latest research and enhance their knowledge-base, on-going training is available. Much of the training is delivered via teleconferences primarily from the Center for Continuing Education in Rehabilitation, Western Washington University. CRC credit is available for these trainings and recent topics have included:

- Using and Understanding the O*Net;
- Developing Jobs in the Public Sector;
- Vocational Assistance for Persons who have a Co-occurring Substance Abuse and Psychiatric Disorder;
- Vocational Assistance for Persons with Traumatic Brain Injuries;
- Tele-working as a Reasonable Accommodation for Employees with Significant Disabilities
- Vocational Assistance for Persons with Autism;

Annually, staff receive training from medical professionals on the medical aspects of disabilities such as obesity, neuropsychological evaluation, and diabetes. ADVR also trains staff annually through regional trainings on new initiatives and changes in the law. The training team utilizes information from entities and organizations such as The Institute on Rehabilitation Issues, The National Rehabilitation Association, and the National Rehabilitation Counseling Association.

ADVR has also developed its own training modules on core rehabilitation principles. These modules are available via the ADVR intra-net as well as through the printed media. These modules and other training opportunities are available to ADVR's Tribal VR partners.

Additionally, members of the Training and Staff Development Team maintain relations with the Regional Rehabilitation Continuing Education Program based at Western Washington University. This program provides training on current issues and research such as performance based outcomes.

Individual Communication Needs

The Division employs a full-time staff member who is fluent in American Sign Language (ASL) to facilitate communication with the deaf and hard of hearing consumers and staff. The Division also supports staff to gain skills in ASL to increase the number of staff who are able to communicate with consumers who are deaf. When possible, consumers with specific language skills are referred to staff possessing those secondary language skills.

The Department of Labor and Workforce Development has a list of fluent interpreters for in-demand languages such as Tagalog, Russian and Spanish. Staff will also solicit the services from a qualified language interpreter when needed. The Division relies heavily on the Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation programs to coach our staff on the cultural appropriate methods of communication with our Alaska native consumers.

Coordination of Personnel Development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act

The division works in collaboration with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEED) and the school districts around the State to ensure special education professionals are knowledgeable of the Vocational Rehabilitation program. Special education teachers from around the State participate in ADVR summer internship programs. This program has been highly successful in training the teachers as to the purpose and workings of the VR program. ADVR has also contributed to the DEED's effort to develop a personnel development system for special education teachers. ADVR also works closely with the Job Center partners for cross training of staff.

Attachment 4.11(a)

Comprehensive Statewide Assessment

Methodology

Alaska is in the process of transitioning from an on-going comprehensive assessment of the rehabilitation needs of Alaskans with disabilities to an assessment conducted on a triennial cycle. This plan should be considered the first year of a three-year assessment period using data collected in FY2006.

The Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (ADVR) in conjunction with the Governor's Committee on Employment and Rehabilitation of People with Disabilities (GCERPDP) functioning as the State Rehabilitation Council assess the statewide rehabilitation needs of people with disabilities. Information collected in the assessment process comes from: ADVR's consumer's case files and facility site reviews, consumer satisfaction surveys, public forums and testimony, in-house data analysis, ADVR's strategic planning process, and stakeholders representing specific disability groups such as the blind, deaf, mentally ill, or developmentally disabled.

Individuals with the Most Significant Disabilities, including Supported Employment

ADVR is not operating under an order of selection and is able to serve all eligible Alaskans. At the end of FFY2006, 83% of all cases open during the year were coded as either significantly disabled (SD) or most significantly disabled (MSD).

While only one case was closed due to extended services not available, long term funding is not available to cover all who need those support services. Natural supports often provide the long-term supports in these cases. The Division of Senior and Disabilities Services reports at the end of June 2006, there were 1,006 individuals on the developmentally disabled registry waiting for services with the average wait being 38 months.

Identified Needs:

- Community mental health programs retain and/or reinstate vocational programs
- Additional funding for long term supports for supported employment consumers
- Accessible and affordable housing
- Accessible transportation

Individuals with Disabilities who are Minorities

ADVR addresses services to minority consumers through the hiring of a culturally diverse staff, by providing cultural diversity training to ADVR staff, and by forming a consortium with the eleven Section 121 Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation (TVR) grantees. The mission of the consortium is to assist Alaska Natives with disabilities in obtaining employment and independence through the collaboration and training of TVR and ADVR staff.

The most recent census data indicates that Alaska's primary minority group is Native Alaskans at 17% of the state's population. This is the highest percentage of Native Americans in any state. In FFY2006, Alaska Natives/American Indians comprised 21% of ADVR's caseload. On the surface, it appears ADVR is servicing this population effectively. However, data also indicates that there is a higher incidence of disability among Alaskan Natives than the general population. The Alaska Native Health Service organization reports that 29% of Alaska Native surveyed self-report having a disability which is about twice the rate for the general population. Providing services to Alaska Natives is made more difficult what with 42% living in very remote areas of the state with little or no roads.

ADVR has itinerant counselors serving hub communities who provide a range of services to surrounding villages. Even so, ADVR has difficulty serving the most remote villages due to transportation and cultural issues. TVR counselors have the cultural acceptance ADVR counselors often do not have and the RSA 121 grantees cover over half the communities and villages in Alaska. ADVR relies heavily on the TVR programs for guidance and collaboration to provide VR services to rural Alaska. ADVR and TVR share joint cases and TVR counselors participate in ADVR counselor trainings.

Identified Needs:

- Counselors in rural areas
- Continued collaboration with Tribal VR programs

Individuals with Disabilities who have been Unserved or Underserved

ADVR and the GCERPD have identified two primary groups as underserved: transition students and those individuals living in rural Alaska. Another group which self-identifies as underserved are the blind.

The Alaska Independent Blind (AIB) Association has put forth the formation of a separate blind commission in the state as they believe the blind are not receiving an adequate level of service from ADVR. In FFY 2006, 2.6% or 104 of the 3,960 individuals DVR served were blind with 5.1% of the entire case service expenditures were spent on this group of individuals. Even though the numbers do not support the AIB's contention, ADVR is taking their concerns seriously and responding accordingly.

Although ADVR counselors have worked with high schools for several years, transition students remain a population group that is under-served. A survey done in FFY2005 by the GCERPD of families with special education students showed that most families were unfamiliar with ADVR services.

Another group identified in public testimony as being under-served is rural Alaska. Due to the size of the state and lack of roads connecting many areas of the state, serving rural Alaska is a challenge for all state agencies, not just ADVR. Many of the residents of rural Alaska are Alaska Natives and are able to receive joint services from TVR and ADVR. Even so, ADVR has the responsibility to provide services to all Alaskans.

Identified Needs:

- Overall lack of services in rural Alaska
- More counselors assigned to high schools
- Evaluate needs of blind Alaskans

Individuals with Disabilities Served through Other Components of the Statewide Workforce Investment System

ADVR is an active participant in the statewide workforce investment system with VR counselors permanently housed in seven of the nine One-Stop Job Centers.

Job Centers are a primary focus area of the ADVR strategic plan with a goal of improving customer service through collaborative, integrated service at job centers to increase employment opportunities for Alaskans with disabilities.

Identified Needs:

- Ensure ADVR consumers have equal access to training funds administered by One-Stop partners
- Ensure AT devices available in One-Stop Job Centers
- Ensure programs and physical facilities are accessible

Assessment of the Need to Establish, Develop or Improve Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRP) within the State

There are fifty-eight Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRP's) currently employed by ADVR providing an array of services to consumers. Thirty-seven are located in the three largest urban areas of the state: Anchorage, Fairbanks and Juneau. This leaves the remainder of the state to be served by a total of twenty-one CRPs. Many of these are very small businesses, usually having only one or two employees.

Identified Needs:

- More job coaches and on-the-job support services are needed in rural areas
- New CRPs need training on VR expectations and duties of a CRP

Attachment 4.11(b)

Annual Estimates

ADVR was not operating under an Order of Selection during FY2006. There was adequate funding and qualified staff to serve all eligible individuals. We anticipate this situation will continue.

Analysis of funding streams:

- The current Governor's budget beginning July 1, 2007 has ADVR funded at FY2007 level for case services with an increment to cover additional personal services costs.
- ADVR is cautiously optimistic the COLA will be included in the federal funding.
- Social security receipts are not expected to increase in FY2008 based upon the last two year's receipts. Alaska's slow down in SSA receipts seems to be following a national trend.
- There is adequate funding for supported employment services. These funds were not spent at the same rate as the previous year, even though the number of individuals served increased slightly.
- Pressure will be put on Title I funds in FY2008 as the number of plans written in FY2006 increased by 8% from FY2005.

ADVR continues to distribute funds to the counselor level with oversight by regional managers. We believe this method of budgeting provides more accountability and better financial management by counselors, thus maximizing case service dollars. As stewards of public funds, ADVR counselors work to utilize comparable benefits. Counselors also work with consumers to determine that services on an IPE are required to achieve a vocational outcome versus being a service wanted by the consumer.

The following are actual numbers from FY2006 and projections for FY2008:

	2006 Actuals	2008 Projections
Eligible Individuals	1,911	1,900
Plans Written	905	900
Plans Implemented	2,378	2,400
Title I Participants	3,778	3,800
Title VI Participants	170	170
Title I Case Service Expenditures	\$3,878,406	\$4,700,000
Title VI Case Service Expenditures	\$205,616	\$300,000

Attachment 4.11(c)(1)

Goals and Priorities of the State in Carrying Out the Vocational Rehabilitation and Supported Employment Programs

The goals and priorities for Alaska DVR are developed jointly by ADVR and the Governor's Committee on the Employment and Rehabilitation of People with Disabilities (GCERPD) using information gathered from the comprehensive needs assessment.

Goal 1 – ADVR will provide high quality services to all eligible individuals including those requiring Supported Employment services by expanding service delivery systems and by managing resources to stay off an order of selection.

Goal 1 reflects ADVR's continued focus on improving services throughout the state to those individuals who were identified as under served in the needs assessment while managing to serve all eligible individuals by staying off an order of selection. These groups of underserved include Alaskan Natives, blind individuals, those individuals living in rural Alaska, and transition students

Goal 2 – ADVR will employ qualified personnel to effectively serve our consumers and provide for future organizational leadership by providing adequate resources for on-going training and staff development.

Goal 2 reflects ADVR's commitment to the CSPD standards as well as developing future leaders. Other issues addressed include the need for continuing education on emerging issues such as FASD, autism, and self-employment and the need for staff to have case management tools.

Goal 3 – ADVR will work to ensure the programmatic and physical accessibility of One-Stop Job Centers; to expand long-term supported services for SE consumers; and to enhance services provided by other programs to individuals with disabilities by collaborating with WIA partners, the Division of Disability and Senior Services and other stakeholders.

Goal 3 reflects the need to partner and strengthen ADVR's connection to other programs that serve people with disabilities. It is important for ADVR to clearly communicate to others what we can do well, who we can serve, and how we can work collaboratively with others for the good of people with disabilities. This goal also reflects the support ADVR can give to other programs in their efforts to gain additional resources, such as the additional support needed for extended services for Supported Employment consumers.

Attachment 4.11(c)(4)

Goals and Plans for Distribution of Title VI, Part B Funds

The Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation continues to have adequate funding to provide VR services to all eligible individuals who require supported employment (SE) services. SE funds are distributed statewide to all offices. The actual services provided under an IPE are determined on a case by case basis. ADVR estimates 170 individuals will be served during FY2008

Through the comprehensive needs assessment, ADVR has identified the need for additional state-wide funding for the provision of extended services through the Division of Behavioral Health and for community mental health programs to include a vocational component.

Attachment 4.11(d)

State's Strategies and Use of Title I Fund for Innovation and Expansion Activities

Strategies

The strategies listed below relate to accomplishing the goals identified in Attachment 4.11(c)(1).

Goal 1 – ADVR will provide high quality services to all eligible individuals including those requiring Supported Employment services by expanding service delivery systems and by managing resources to stay off an order of selection.

- Collaborate with Tribal VR programs to gain access to and improve services to rural Alaska to overcome the barriers of distance and transportation issues
- Increase efforts with state special education officials and local school districts to address the needs of transitioning students
- Collaborate with the Alaska Center for the Blind on expanding services to the blind
- Provide training to VR counselors on AT services and assessments from both in-house staff and the Assistive Technologies Library of Alaska
- Collaborate with the SRC to improve the consumer satisfaction survey instrument and to better disseminate the survey results
- Monitor ability to serve all eligible individuals and provide feedback to leadership team
- Monitor progress on federal standards and indicators and the state's mission and measures; generate reports both to the leadership team and the field staff
- Develop a curriculum for new CRPs utilizing both in-house training materials and the University of Alaska Affiliated Program
- Explore methods of evaluating performance of CRPs
- Develop CRPs in rural Alaska
- Work with Anchorage Mental Health Court to assist individuals with mental disabilities who are charged with misdemeanor offenses
- Under the authority of Innovation and Expansion, provide adequate funding to both the SRC and the SILC
- Develop a statewide task force to address the reduction of Supported Employment services due to conflicts with Medicaid incentives
- Continue to distribute Supported Employment funds to all counselors
- Train counselors on the revised Supported Employment policy
- Provide training to staff on the Start-Up Alaska grant for innovative ways to implement self-employment for those with the most significant disabilities
- Provide training on staff on new self-employment policy
- Work with youth councils and schools to explore the expansion of services such as assessment in the schools and other innovative approaches to transition services
- Provide ADVR evaluators with access to the latest AT devices and assessments

Goal 2 – ADVR will employ qualified personnel to effectively serve our consumers and provide for future organizational leadership by providing adequate resources for on-going training and staff development.

- Develop strategies to recruit qualified rehabilitation professionals
- Develop in-house training modules and update the current Policy and Procedures Manual

- Ensure training funds are available to fund graduate programs for those working towards their CRC and to maintain credentials for current CRCs
- Provide staff training on emerging rehabilitation issues such as the impact of FASD
- Provide feedback to staff on performance, both the successes and the areas needing improvement
- Provide leadership development opportunities such as Emerging Leaders and counselors participation in case reviews
- Address succession planning

Goal 3 – ADVR will work to ensure the programmatic and physical accessibility of One-Stop Job Centers; to expand long-term supported services for SE consumers; and to enhance services provided by other programs to individuals with disabilities by collaborating with WIA partners, the Division of Disability and Senior Services and other stakeholders.

- Continue to participate in One-Stop Job Center site reviews to ensure ADA compliance
- Collaborate on grant opportunities such as customized employment and disability program navigators
- Ensure assistive technology devices are available in One-Stop Job Centers for core services accessibility
- Work with WIA partners to provide integrated services to meet the needs of employers.
- Work with the community mental health programs to have vocational programs as part of their service delivery system
- Work with the IL centers through the budget process to obtain additional state funds for services to most severely disabled
- Represent the needs of people with disabilities on the Workforce Investment Board and other training programs to ensure training opportunities are available
- Ensure ADVR consumers have equal access to Job Training accounts and training opportunities administered through WIA programs
- Work with CILs and Commission on Older Alaskans to request additional state funds in support of additional services for the Older Blind
- Collaborate with the Employment Security Division to mitigate the impact of the loss of Wagner-Peyser funding which funds One-Stop Job Center positions
- Work within the Job Centers to implement new strategies to expand services for self-employment under the Start-Up Alaska grant
- Continue to provide in-kind support within the Job Centers to expand services for people with disabilities through the Disability Navigator Program
- Continue to support and expand the principles of integrated support teams through collaboration with Health and Social Services and the family centered planning model
- Form a coalition with the Division of Disability and Senior Services and other stakeholders to increase funds for long-term supports for Supported Employment consumers

Attachment 4.11(e)(2)

Evaluation and Report of Progress in Achieving Identified Goals and Activities

The progress made in achieving the goals of the Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (ADVR) during FY2006 is listed below. These goals have been revised in the FY2008 State Plan based on the information gathered in the comprehensive needs assessment.

Goal 1 - Serve all individuals eligible for vocational rehabilitation services.

Measure: On an order of selection

Outcome: ADVR met this goal. We were able to serve all those eligible for vocational rehabilitation services and did not go on an order of selection.

Strategies: Reports from the AWARE case management system are used at all levels of the division to track and monitor resources. VR counselors are trained on the principles of informed choice within the context of providing needed services on IPEs versus services that are only wanted. Similar benefits are maximized.

Goal 2 - Provide efficient and timely services.

Measure: From case reviews: time spent in IPE development and application status.

Outcome: Results were high acceptable and acceptable.

Strategies: All VR counselors and support staff are trained on the use of reports from the AWARE system to track activity due dates. Data from case reviews and MIS is analyzed to identify trends or best practices in service delivery. Provide feedback on a regular basis to counselors to encourage continued efforts for timely services.

Goal 3 - Maintain current number of individuals closed with an employment outcome.

Measure: 526 successful closures.

Outcome: ADVR met this goal with 527 successful closures.

Strategies: Educate entire staff and reinforce through yearly reminders at regional trainings on the importance of meeting the federal standards and indicators and the state's missions and measures of which this goal is included in each of those. Through entertaining reminders, get staff to own the success of this goal. Set yearly performance for each VR counselor. Management closely monitors progress toward meeting performance goals.

Goal 4 - Generate quality outcomes with an emphasis on careers to produce a living wage.

Measure: Average wages at closure as a percentage of the federal poverty level. The Alaska Workforce Investment Board defines as a level of self-sufficiency or living wage for adults at 175% of the federal poverty level.

Outcome: ADVR met this goal; the average wages at closure was 227% of the federal poverty level.

Strategies: Train counselors on principles of informed choice and what constitutes a living wage. Provide feedback to counselors on the increases in wages from application to closure.

Goal 5 - Maximize the principles of informed choice throughout the vocational rehabilitation process.

Measure: Case review results.

Outcome: Ninety percent of the cases reviewed documented the principles of informed choice implemented throughout the rehabilitation process. This is considered acceptable, but could be improved upon. ADVR has since rewritten our policy on informed choice and all staff were trained on the new policy at regional trainings.

Strategies:

Goal 6 - Expand and solidify collaborative efforts with schools, Tribal VR programs, community rehabilitation programs and WIA partners.

Measure: Types of interaction with schools, TVR, CRPs and WIA partners

Outcome:

Schools: Cooperative Agreements with all school districts in place; additional counselors assigned to schools; summer internships for special education teachers reinstated.

Tribal VR programs: Assistant Chief of Rehabilitation assigned as a liaison to Tribal consortium; tribal staff invited to ADVR training; and working of joint cases continues to be a priority.

CRPs: Pilot program to include review of CRP performance and utilization as part of the case review process; committee formed composed of CRPs and ADVR staff to pilot a mentoring program and develop a work plan for development and training of CRPs.

WIA partners: Cross training of job center staff; collaborated on grants such as customized employment and disability program navigators; developed job center teams around assessment and training.

Strategies:

Schools: All school districts have VR counselors assigned to them. Summer internship program for special education teachers was reinstated and expanded using funding from the Department of Education and Early Development. Assign transition coordinator to develop relationship with special education directors. Transition coordinator represents ADVR and makes presentation at special education directors' annual conference. Transition coordinator collaborates with various community partners who have youth and employment as a focus.

Tribal VR programs: Establish a high level position within the division to be the liaison with the tribal directors. Support the efforts of the tribal programs in writing their grants for continued funding. Include all tribal counselors in VR trainings. Maximize the number joint VR-TRV cases. Continue to support VR-TRV consortium

CRPs: Include the division's CRP specialist on the ADVR case review team. Form a work team within the division to define the overall needs around CRPs.

WIA partners: Reinstate the training academy in the One-Stop Job Centers; develop statewide teams to prevent partners from duplicating efforts and expenditure of resources.

Goal 7 - Work with job center partners and employers to provide integrated services to meet the needs of employers and businesses.

Measure: Job center teams formed

Outcome: ADVR initiated the Integrated Employment Services Committee (IES) within the Job Centers to establish unified marketing strategies to employers; cross train staff to better understand the assortment of services available to consumers to maximize their success; and share job leads in order to have a single point of contact for employers.

Strategies: ADVR staff are members of the Anchorage One-Stop Job Center Employer committee which provides outreach to employers. Disseminate Anchorage Job Center employer model to other regions in the state.

Goal 8 - Increase the number of Centers for Independent Living consumers who are jointly served by ADVR who are seeking employment.

Measure: Number of joint cases

Outcome: There has been no increase in the number of consumers jointly served by VR and the CILs. VR's focus has been on the schools and transition services and the Tribal VR programs in rural Alaska.

Strategies: Include an employment focus in the SPIL. Support CILs in efforts to obtain increased state funding. ADVR has a strong representation on the SILC.

Goal 9 - Increase services to youth who experience a disability who are transitioning from school to work.

Measure: Increase in youth as ADVR consumers and an increase in information and referral services for youth oriented agencies.

Outcome: 15% in FY 2006 applicants were youth, increase of 1% from FY 2005; ADVR staff helped develop and participated in the (1) Parent Academy which provides information to parents to assist their child transition from school to adulthood; (2) Transition Academy which brings together high school special education teachers to help them learn about available local social services and the job center; and (3) Youth in Transition Grant which developed a comprehensive resource guide for teachers. Brochures on VR developed for and given to special education teachers.

Strategies: All school districts have VR counselors assigned to them. Summer internship program for special education teachers was reinstated and expanded using funding from the Department of Education and Early Development. Assign transition coordinator to develop relationship with

special education directors. Transition coordinator represents ADVR and makes presentation at special education directors' annual conference. Transition coordinator collaborates with various community partners who have youth and employment as a focus.

Goal 10 - Employ and develop highly skilled and qualified rehabilitation staff.

Measure: Number of staff who are certified rehabilitation counselors (CRCs) or who are in graduate programs to become CRCs and increase counselor salaries to retain qualified staff.

Outcome: Alaska Division of Personnel has agreed to a VR counselor study; three ADVR counselors obtained CRC certification; and seven employees were enrolled in distance learning graduate programs.

Strategies: Work with Division of Personnel to raise the salaries for VR counselors to be commensurate with the education and experience required. Support VR staff lacking the academic credentials to sit for the CRC by paying for tuition and books for those classes. Provide ongoing CRC certified training for CRCs in order to maintain their certification. ADVR will market VR as a career choice at job fairs.

Standards and Indicators

The State met or exceeded all the federal standards and indicators. ADVR remains committed to working with people with disabilities to obtain jobs with good wages, to provide services in a timely manner and to maintain productivity. ADVR staff is well aware of these values and strives to meet a high level of performance.

Innovation and Expansion

Consistent with the requirements of section 101(a) (18) of the Act, ADVR supports Governor's Council for Employment and Rehabilitation of People with Disabilities and Statewide Independent Living Council. ADVR also supports the improvement and expansion of services to people with disabilities through the Job Center network.

Attachment 6.3

Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported Employment Services

Supported employment creates opportunity for Alaskans with the most severe disabilities including those with developmental disabilities, severe mental illness and traumatic brain injuries. The opportunity to secure and maintain meaningful employment requires a collaborative effort between ADVR and those agencies providing the required long term supports.

Quality of Supported Employment Services

Quality of supported employment services is assured through the employment of a number of tools including:

- The establishment of formal Service Provider Agreements between ADVR and those providing the rehabilitation services;
- The exercise of informed choice by the ADVR consumer;
- Proactive rehabilitation counselors;
- Program evaluations and reviews;
- Public forums; and
- ADVR staff involvement in committees and boards pertaining to the needs of those eligible for supported employment.

Appropriate, quality services are the outcome of a process in which the consumer satisfaction assumes a role of paramount importance. Standards for integrated work settings for individuals with most severe disabilities are jointly established by the counselor and consumer. Key emphasis is placed upon the: strengths; interests; concerns; abilities; and capabilities of the individual.

ADVR has an on-going commitment to quality supported employment services as evidenced by the recent formation of a high level committee including the ADVR Chief of Field Services and the Executive Director of the Governor's Council on Disabilities to evaluate the current level of supported employment services available.

Scope and Extent of Services

During FFY 2006, ADVR purchased services from eight-six different vendors from around the State for supported employment eligible consumers. The majority of service providers are located in urban areas or rural hub communities. In an effort to provide supported employment services in remote villages, ADVR works collaboratively with the Section 121 Tribal VR programs to develop and provide rehabilitation services.

ADVR has a matching grant from the Mental Health Trust Authority for self-employment ventures for those individuals who are Trust beneficiaries. This population includes individuals who are mentally ill or have experienced a traumatic brain injury. Effective Customized Employment (CE) strategies have also taken hold throughout the workforce system. ADVR has integrated into its service delivery system many of the features of the customized wrap-around service approach.

Transition to Extended Services

ADVR provides supported employment (SE) services using funds as authorized under Title VI of the Rehabilitation Act to those eligible individuals who, because of the significance of their disability, require intensive services to gain employment and extended services to maintain employment.

ADVR provides intensive SE services under a place and train model until employment stability is achieved for a period not to exceed 18 months. The individual then transitions into the long term extended services needed for job maintenance. Extended services are provided by an agency other than ADVR or through natural supports.

A VR counselor must have a reasonable expectation that extended services are or will become available to the individual prior to developing an individualized plan for employment (IPE) to provide SE services.

ADVR provides intensive training services to SE consumers for a maximum of 18 months. Special circumstances may occur where the VR counselor and the individual agree to extend the training in order to achieve the vocational goal on the IPE. Supported employment providers who do not receive extended support funding from the Division of Senior and Disability Services, use natural supports and non-traditional resources to provide extended support services.